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ABSTRACT

THE CCNCEPT OF ACCOUNTABILITY, THE NOTION THAT SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES SHOULD SHOULDER THE RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE LEARNING SUCCESSES OR FAILURES OF THEIR PUPILS, CALLS FOR A REVAMPING OF MUCH OF OUR THINKING ABOUT THE ROLES OF EDUCATIONAL PERSONNEL AND INSTITUTIONS AT ALL LEVELS. TO CREATE A SOCIETY THAT IS FREE, OPEN, COMPASSIONATE, NONRACIST, MULTICULTURAL, AND PRODUCTIVE REQUIRES AN EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM WITH THE SAME CHARACTERISTICS. THE EDUCATION PROFESSIONS DEVELOPMENT ACT (EPDA) IS AN ACKNOWLEDGEMENT THAT EARLIER ACTS WERE INEFFECTIVE IN EQUALIZING, INDIVIDUALIZING, AND HUMANIZING INSTRUCTION AND THAT THE ONLY WAY TO BRING ABOUT CHANGE IN EDUCATION IS BY BRINGING ABOUT CHANGE IN THE PEOPLE WHO CONTROL AND OPERATE THE SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES. EVALUATION OF THE NEW FEDERAL PROGRAMS WILL BE BASED NOT CN THE MEANS CF TRAINING PERSONNEL, BUT ON THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE LEARNING THAT RESULTS. NEW EMPHASES INCLUDE PREPARING PERSCNNEL TC WORK WITH DISADVANTAGED AND HANDICAPPED; CHANGING THE SYSTEM FOR PREPARING PERSONNEL; LONG-TERM PROJECTS INVOLVING PARTNERSHIPS AMONG COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES, STATE AND LCCAL SCHOOL SYSTEMS, AND THE COMMUNITY TO BE SERVED. THREE EPDA PRIORITIES ARE PROGRAMS (1) TC TRAIN PERSONNEL IN FIELDS OF CRITICAL SHORTAGES, (2) TC TRAIN PERSONNEI TO MEET CRITICAL PROBLEMS IN THE SCHOOLS, AND (3) TO BRING NEW KINDS OF PEOPLE INTO THE SCHOOLS, AND TO DEMCNSTRATE, THROUGH TRAINING, NEW AND MORE EFFECTIVE MEANS OF UTILIZING PERSCNNEL. (JS)

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THE "RELEVANCE" OF ACCOUNTABILITY*

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I have it on good authority that "accountability" will soon replace "relevance" as the "in" word among educators. I hope this is a reliable tip for two reasons. First, along with most people, I am stuffed to the eyeballs with relevance, irrelevance, semi-relevance, and pseudo-relevance of people, programs, projects, and promises. Second, and more important, "accountability," I hope, will be more than an "in" word, a current fashion in semantics. I see it as an "in" concept that comes to grips with a notion too many schoolmen have too long rejected -- the notion that schools and colleges should shoulder the responsibility for the learning successes or failures of their pupils.

This concept of accountability calls for a revamping of much of our thinking about the roles of educational personnel and educational institutions at all levels. It links student performance with teacher performance. It implies precise educational goals. It forecasts the measurement of achievement. It means, in effect, that schools and colleges will be judged by how they perform, not by what they promise. It means that we are moving in a direction we have been contemplating for a long time -- shifting primary learning

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responsibility from the student to the school. It also means that a lot of people are going to be shaken up.

Now the word accountability can be interpreted in several ways. For instance, there is such a thing as accountability to taxpayers. Contrary to our American oversimplification, our free public schools are not free. They are paid for with taxes and the taxpayers have a right to know what they are getting for their money. And there is such a thing as accountability to the Congress and to State and local legislative bodies. They are responsible for appropriating funds for educational programs and they have a right to know how productive these programs have been.

I have no objection to making the schools accountable to taxpayers or legislators. But I am talking about another type of accountability, the kind that holds teachers and aides and principals and superintendents and school board members accountable for the educational achievements of all of their clients -- those who come to school well prepared to share in its benefits as well as those who have nothing in their backgrounds that would equip them for a successful learning experience.

I said a few moments ago that the concept of accountability implies precise educational goals. Let us look at the primary goal: to create a society that is free and open and compassionate, that is non-racist, that is multicultural, and that is productive.

To achieve that kind of society, we somehow have to learn to create an educational system that is free and open and compassionate and non-racist and productive.

That kind of educational system requires one basic thing -- changing people. That means changing ourselves and all of the people who have anything to do with running and serving the schools -- teachers, aides, parents, counselors, superintendents, and school board members.

It means changing the institutions which control education -- the colleges and universities, State departments of education, local education agencies, the Federal agencies responsible for developing education programs -- by changing the concepts and attitudes of the people who control them. We need people and institutions capable of continuous change, continuous renewal, and continuous responsiveness to the needs of a variety of children from a variety of backgrounds and with a variety of hangups as well as a variety of talents.

The Federal Government has for several years now put a great deal of money and effort into compensatory programs designed to equalize educational opportunity for children from low-income families. I am referring especially to programs under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. And we have tried to increase the expertise of teachers under provisions of both the National Defense Education Act and the Higher Education Act. Add to these the efforts to tackle adult illiteracy, to upgrade vocational education, to finance the purchase of equipment, and to provide for the construction of libraries and laboratories and other facilities. The sad fact is that none of these programs has had the kind of impact we had hoped for. None has been effective in equalizing or individualizing or humanizing instruction.

The Education Professions Development Act is an acknowledgement that we put the cart before the horse. The Act says, in effect, that none of the new education measures, no matter how meticulously designed, no matter how noble in intent, no matter how expensively financed, can be effective without people prepared to make them effective. It says that the only way we can bring about change in education is by bringing about change in the people who control and operate the schools and colleges.

Such a drastic change in concept is bound to arouse anxiety and fear in the people and institutions embarking upon such change. That is what I meant when I said that a lot of people are going to be shaken up. I would like to go into that further in a moment. But in the meantime, a look at some of the problems we face is in order.

As we move in new directions, it is clear that teaching is becoming a more demanding and more sophisticated profession than it has been in the past. In our search for ways to meet the goals we have set for ourselves, we are faced with more questions than answers. Teachers and all school personnel are involved in the search for answers to critical questions such as these:

- How do we move from a mass approach to teaching and learning to a highly individualized approach?
- How do we go about the "simple" task of treating each child as an individual human being?

- How do we succeed with those youngsters who have never experienced success?
- How do we substitute a vigorous enjoyable classroom atmosphere for one that has too often been marked by competition and pain and fear and failure?
- And last, how do we build into ourselves the capacity for continuing self renewal, for meeting increasing demands, for adapting to new roles?

We do not know the answers to all of these questions. But we do know that if we are to find the answers, new techniques, new skills, new attitudes, in fact a whole new concept of teaching and learning is called for. No individual teacher in a self-contained classroom can put into practice all of the changes inherent in the goals to which we aspire.

We also know that we will not find the answers by looking at curriculum changes, relying on technology, or by simply allocating more money to the schools. We will find them by taking a hard look at a variety of people who can be trained to augment the work of the teacher, leaving the teacher free to teach. We will find them by looking at arrangements that make for more effective staff utilization. We will find them through cooperative efforts that link the schools that employ educational personnel with the institutions that train them.

We are not without models for this new educational experience. By now, we have witnessed the results of team teaching. Interns working in the Teacher Corps or similar programs have proved effective. Teacher aides and other auxiliary personnel have helped numerous school systems individualize instruction. Where differentiated staffing has been tried, the outlook is promising. In fact, I plan to spend most of tomorrow looking in on some of these projects here at the University of Minnesota.

One of the most promising models, and one I want to take an especially close look at while I am here, is the Career Opportunities Program (COP). Planning for the program has been going on for some time, and it will be launched early next spring. The Minneapolis

program is one of approximately 130 throughout the country designed to produce a system for orderly change in two directions -- first, in the very organization and structure of the local school system and second, in the alignment of priorities in teacher training institutions.

COP has to do with attracting bright, ambitious, and deeply concerned people from low-income communities into the schools as teacher aides or technicians. Now this is not a new idea, but COP encourages all of the institutions which control opportunity in education to take a fresh look at these people and place a new value on them. It requires that they be viewed as individuals who may, with a combination of inservice work experience in the school and academic courses in the college, develop from aides to assistant teachers, to interns, and eventually to fully certified members of the education professions.

COP is designed not only to open education's gates to persons from low-income areas, but it aims to enhance the careers of overburdened experienced teachers by providing them with much-needed assistance and support. One major goal of COP is to put the teacher in a position to reorder his time, reduce the number of children who require his personal attention, and concentrate on his real job -- diagnosing and prescribing for the learning processes. It is our belief at the Office of Education that the teacher can be placed in that position if the talents of community people are tapped -- if we court people able to serve a variety of functions, starting with simple supportive tasks and eventually sharing in more sophisticated responsibilities.

The most important goal of COP, of course, is to improve the education of children in urban and rural low-income areas. It draws upon experiences in Mexican-American communities, for example, where bilingual

auxiliary personnel are helping to bridge cultural and language gaps between students and teachers.

We also know that in many instances teachers have found the aide's manner of relating to the children so good that it could be duplicated. In some instances teachers started changing their style of communication with children and made new efforts to understand their problems. For many children, seeing adults from their own communities involved in the schools helped them build expectations for themselves and a confidence in the educational process.

The reason I have great hopes for the success of COP and the reason I dwell upon it here is that the whole concept is one of partnership -- something that until now has been alien to all of the parties involved. New alliances and new working arrangements were required before sites could be funded for COP projects. Local education agencies, for example, had to involve their staffs in developing the work experience aspect of the project. Training institutions had to provide appropriate academic training. State departments of education had to participate so that necessary modifications in certification requirements could be made. The community had to provide committed and talented persons who are stimulated by the prospect of interaction with children, by the opportunity for college experience, and by the anticipation of an open-end career.

Most important of all to you people here, I think, is the

radical departure from traditional training programs COP imposes. It gives major responsibility to local school districts and their staffs instead of to colleges and universities. It provides power for the school system to buy the packages and programs deemed significant and essential from teacher training institutions and to reject others. This approach reflects a change that affects not only those being trained. but the trainers as well.

Many local education agencies take the position that they have a role to play in staff development, that they can accommodate themselves to the needs of poverty area classrooms, that the school itself has many of the necessary components for sharing in teacher training responsibility. For one thing, there is a practical setting -- a pupil population, administrators, a community environment, contact with parents. All of these factors take training out of the abstract and give recruits an opportunity to see it "like it is."

School districts also say they could improve teacher preparation efforts if they had options that allowed them to work with the colleges and universities in determining training needs that preservice applicants must have in order to be effective. The Office of Education is answering: Fine. We think you have a point. The colleges and universities are not doing the best job of training personnel to be effective in low-income neighborhoods. We think a better job can be done if both institutions work together.

Early in this speech I said that the new design for educational reform would shake up some people. I am certain the movement toward sharing training responsibility with the schools is doing just that.

Let me hasten to add that the Office of Education is not preaching the demise of teacher training institutions. We are, instead, suggesting that they strengthen their positions and their programs by venturing out from under the protective ivy to explore new domains, new relationships, and new alliances. We are further suggesting that school districts draw upon the expertise of their own experienced teachers and put it to work in training new people. It is not too far fetched to think that this kind of arrangement can yield a rich body of information that would be of tremendous value if plowed back into the college curriculum. I would hope to see this kind of activity develop. And I would hope it would precipitate a thorough examination by teacher training institutions of their courses, their methods, and their relationships with the consumers of their products. Such an examination is long overdue.

I would also go a step further and suggest that teacher training institutions take a close look at what they mean by "training." A recent study conducted by the American Association of Colleges of Teacher Education and Ball State University with an Office of Education grant delves into this subject expertly and in great depth. Out of that study came a paperback book which some of you may have seen. It is called "Teachers for the Real World."

The burden of the book, especially as it relates to colleges and universities, is that there must be two major shifts in the

field of teacher education: 1) A far more orderly and systematic procedure must be created for the preparation of the teacher in relation to the tasks of teaching. 2) This can best be accomplished by adopting procedures which are clinically and case-study oriented. In short, the study calls for an end to courses dominated by lectures and discussion and experiences and a movement toward clinical training.

The study also challenges colleges and universities to develop a systematic body of information, including audio-visual material, that will help prospective teachers analyze their behavior, clarify concepts, and interpret situations.

This whole idea, of course, is also guaranteed to shake up a number of people. Just the word "training" is enough to do it, for educators have long considered that word inapplicable to them and it offends their sensitivities. However, all that we know about training in other occupations would indicate that there is room for some second thoughts on this subject. Surgeons are trained and so are airplane pilots and because they are trained they can perform their duties with relaxed control and respond to new sitvations constructively. What the study says is that there is no difference between training a surgeon and pilot and training a teacher. It requires practice under controlled conditions.

These are the types of changes which are in the wind and about which we are doing a lot of thinking and planning. The U.S. Office of Education will be taking a national leadership role in stimulating

the kinds of changes I have been discussing. This is in accordance with Commissioner Allen's recent statement pledging that the Office of Education will advocate needed reform and improvement in meeting education's problems and needs.

What this means for teacher training -- and indeed training of all kinds of educational personnel -- is that Federal programs for meeting educational manpower needs under the Education Professions Development Act will be funded only if they can be evaluated on the basis of performance. The essential element in evaluation will no longer be the means by which educational personnel are trained, but the effectiveness of the learning that takes place as a result of that training. In line with this policy, we have established priorities that represent a transition from former training activities that were popular under the National Defense Education Act and other legislation to activities consistent with the goals of the Education Professions Development Act.

Previous EPDA programs -- those inherited from earlier legislation -- had little concern for the target population of children to be served by the personnel being trained. Our new priorities put the child first. The programs have a very heavy, but not exclusive, emphasis on the preparation of personnel to work more effectively with disadvantaged and handicapped children. And all EPDA programs are oriented toward the elimination of race, family income, and physical and mental handicaps as deterrents to equal opportunity.

Why the emphasis on personnel to work with the disadvantaged? Admittedly, for the majority of the population our school system has been productive, but for a substantial portion it has failed and continues to fail. Leaving aside the moral issue completely, experience proves that every citizen pays a price in money, in uncertainty, in fear, in social problems for the school failures, for the dropouts, for the undereducated.

It has been estimated, for example, that every dropout costs the nation about $1000 a year while he is unemployed. Add to that the cost of crime and penal institutions, the price to the country of high military rejection rates, the cost of welfare, and the many other services required to support persons who either reject or are rejected by society -- and you will see why we are forced, as Commissioner Allen has said, "to move or to face disaster."

We are also making a transition from programs which were remedial in their efforts to upgrade the subject matter competencies of teachers to programs which emphasize change -- changing the system by which educational personnel are prepared. Ultimately, this should eliminate the need for remedial training programs.

A third transition is from primarily short-term, exclusively college-based training to an emphasis on long-term projects which involve a partnership of colleges and universities, State and local school systems, and the community to be served by the personnel to be trained.

And finally, there is the transition from programs that are limited in focus, that concentrate on specific subjects, to programs

that focus on priority fields.

What has emerged from the convergence of these transitional forces are three priorities which cut across the lines distinguishing one part of the Act from another. The priorities are:

1) Programs for training personnel in fields of critical shortages, such as early childhood education, vocational-technical education, special education, bilingual education, educational media, school administration, and education in correctional institutions.

2) Programs to train personnel to meet critical problems in the schools. These include a program designed to aid black teachers in the South, particularly those threatened with displacement through desegregation. A new Rural-Urban program will assist experienced teachers in urban and rural poverty area schools in raising the level of pupil achievement.

3) Programs to bring new kinds of people into the schools, and to demonstrate, through training, new and more effective means of utilizing educational personnel and delivering educational services. These include five programs -- the Career Opportunities Program which I described earlier, the Teacher Corps, programs for Trainers of Teacher Trainers, programs on School Personnel Utilization to explore a variety of differentiated staffing patterns, and the State Grants program for meeting immediate critical shortages of teachers and aides.

These are the directions in which we are moving, and the philosophy behind that movement. As you can see, when I suggested earlier that "accountability" may become the new "in" word in

education, I had some specific indication that this may prove to be so. Under the Education Professions Development Act, "accountability" will be the hallmark of progress. Teacher training institutions and local school systems will be accountable to the community for the quality of educational services delivered, and teachers will be accountable for what children learn. And this, I submit, has some "relevance" to what American education is all about.

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